

1111 Arlington Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia
March 14, 1968

Mr. Joshua Lederberg
Editorial Department
The Washington Post
1515 L Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C.

Subject: Your excellent editorial of 2/24/68--"We'd
Better Cache Culture on Far Side of the Moon"

Dear Mr. Lederberg:

I read your subject editorial with great interest on the morning of February 24. It was so well done that I clipped it out and laid it aside to show to others here on our Space Council staff. My not using Space Council stationery in writing to compliment you on the editorial does not reflect a conflict of views on the part of my associates, but rather that this a spurious letter which reflects my views, rather than those necessarily of the Space Council itself.

Your editorial was certainly thought-provoking. It is the type of heuristic writing which should stimulate people to think further on both the worth of the space program and mankind's inhumanity to himself. Your words reflect an understanding of sociological man found in very few people. The implications to be found in our present and future space programs are far reaching. We cannot necessarily consider that a dollar invested in the program today should bring a two dollar return next year, or even five years from now. This may well be the case, but it should not be for economic returns exclusively that the space program is carried on. It is quite evident that more people understand economic returns far better than they do sociological

returns. This is evidenced by the large percentage of people who seek to limit our space efforts to applications satellites anchored in low earth orbit. Our present space program is not so oriented, nor should it be. We may never discover economic riches on the moon or any other heavenly body, but that should not deter our effort. No, man is a dynamic entity, and needs many outlets for his energies. Country competing with country in an interplanetary space race is far preferable than the same countries competing in wars and weaponry.

We all hope that the purpose of the space program will not be merely to build a gigantic tombstone for our civilization, though your lunar cache idea would probably be a crypt-record of mankind which would be less likely to be disturbed than if it were placed on earth. Just as you point out, space may ultimately prove to be a survival route for Man, as a well-distributed Mankind is less likely to be destroyed than one which resides only on a single planet. Let us hope, however, that the space program does not have to provide for either Escape or Escapism, although the latter is certainly preferable (and we all acknowledge that the usual news emanating from the space program is fare more palatable than the news of many of other man's activities around the world.)

Relative to manned flights versus unmanned probes, I would like to throw in my extra two cents worth for keeping man "in the loop," for I feel that we must never lose sight of the fact that it is Man who is the important element of all our major efforts, and that machines, however cost-effective they may be in some applications, should only be considered forerunners or adjuncts to Man himself.

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Once again, I appreciate your thoughtful editorial. I shall give it the maximum of distribution that I can.

Very truly yours,


Henry C. Edler